

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 IGA-01 COME-00 FRB-01

SP-02 AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05 RSC-01 CIEP-01 TRSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1609

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BONN

AAUFHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 052

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USOECD PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 4797

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, CB, SN

SUBJ: ESF CONTRIBUTIONS AND DECEMBER 5 MEETING IN MANILA --
SINGAPORE POSITION

REF: STATE 259271

1. SUMMARY. ON NOVEMBER 29 I FOLLOWED UP KHMER AMBASSADOR
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WONGSANITH'S INVITATION TO GOS TO ATTEND DECEMBER 5 ESF

MEETING IN MANILA BY URGING SENIOR MFA OFFICIAL TO RECONSIDER GOS PAST POSITION OF NON-INVOLEMENT IN ESF, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF INITIAL FAVORABLE VOTES AT UNGA ON CAMBODIAN REPRESENTATION ISSUE. I POINTED OUT THAT IF ASEAN-SUPPORTED RESOLUTION IN NEW YORK CALLING FOR NEGOTIATIONS IS TO HAVE ANY MEANING OR EFFECT, GKR MUST BE ABLE TO FUNCTION AND DEMONSTRATE THAT IT HAS SUFFICIENT VIABILITY AND STANDING TO BE ABLE TO ENGAGE SUCCESSFULLY IN NEGOTIATIONS. DEPUTY SECRETARY MFA SAID MFA IS IN PROCESS OF REVIEWING ITS POSITION AND THAT FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM WOULD HAVE TO MAKE THE FINAL DECISION. IN EMBASSY'S JUDGMENT, MUCH WILL DEPEND ON INDONESIA'S DECISION TO PARTICIPATE AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT LOBBIES OTHER ASEAN GOVERNMENTS ON THIS MATTER. END SUMMARY.

2. KHMER AMBASSADOR WONGSANITH CALLED ON DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF MFA TAN BOON SENG ON NOVEMBER 25 TO INVITE GOS TO ATTEND DECEMBER 5 MANILA MEETING AND TO URGE PARTICIPATION IN ESF. WONGSANITH SAID WRITTEN INVITATION FROM CAMBODIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ADDRESSED TO FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM HAD BEEN DELIVERED IN PHNOM PENH TO SINGAPORE EMBASSY. WONGSANITH SAID HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR SINGAPORE'S LOBBYING EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF THE ASEAN-SUPPORTS RESOLUTION ON CAMBODIA IN THE UN&A, AND URGED THE GOS TO FOLLOW THIS UP BY ATTENDING THE MANILA MEETING AND MAKING AT LEAST A SYMBOLIC CONTRIBUTION TO THE ESF. WONGSANITH SAID THAT LAST TIME HE APPROACHED MINISTER RAJARATNAM ON THIS SUBJECT A YEAR OR TWO AGO, RAJARATNAM HAD TOLD HIM THAT A SYMBOLIC CONTRIBUTION BY THE GOS TO THE ESF WOULD NOT DO ANY PRACTICAL GOOD AND WOULD ONLY EXPOSE SINGAPORE TO CRITICISM FROM SOME NON-ALIGNED GOVERNMENTS. THEREFORE, WONGSANITH SAID HE TOLD TAN BOON SENG ON THIS OCCASION THAT IN HIS VIEW A GOS CONTRIBUTION TO ESF WOULD NOT BE INCONSISTENT WITH NON-ALIGNMENT, BUT WOULD CONSTITUTE A HUMANITARIAN GESTURE TO CAMBODIAN PEOPLE AND ALSO SERVE TO KEEP GOVERNMENT SERVICES RUNNING DURING A PERIOD IN WHICH HOPEFULLY BOTH PARTIES WOULD BE MOVING TOWARD NEGOTIATIONS. HE SAID TAN WAS NONCOMMITAL AND OBSERVED THAT GOS WOULD HAVE TO FIND OUT WHAT OTHER ASEAN GOVERNMENTS WERE DOING BEFORE MAKING A DECISION.

3. I CALLED ON TAN BOON SENG ON NOVEMBER 29 TO SUPPORT AMBASSADOR WONGSANITH'S REPRESENTATIONS ALONG LINES REF INSTRUCTION.
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I CONGRATULATED GOS ON OUTCOME OF INITIAL SUCCESSFUL VOTES ON THE ASEAN-SUPPORTED RESOLUTION ON CAMBODIA AT THE UNGA, AND OBSERVED THAT THIS SUCCESS WAS DUE IN LARGE PART TO THE EFFORTS OF THE ASEAN GOVERNMENTS AND REFLECTED THE GROWING POLITICAL INFLUENCE OF ASEAN. I THEN URGED THE GOS TO FOLLOW UP THIS SUCCESS BY PARTICIPATING IN THE ESF MEETING IN MANILA ON DECEMBER 5 AND IF AT ALL POSSIBLE TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION. I NOTED THAT THE GOS WAS NOT CURRENTLY A DONOR, BUT SAID THAT IF THE

SUCCESSFUL ASEAN-SUPPORTED RESOLUTION IN NEW YORK WAS TO HAVE ANY EFFECT THE GOVERNMENT IN PHNOM PENH MUST BE ABLE TO FUNCTION AND DEMONSTRATE THAT IT HAS SUFFICIENT VIABILITY AND STANDING TO BE ABLE TO ENGAGE SUCCESSFULLY IN NEGOTIATIONS.

4. TAN SAID THE GOS RECOGNIZED THAT IT MIGHT SEEM TO SOME OBSERVERS THAT THE GOS WAS BEING INCONSISTENT IF IT DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE ESF AFTER HAVING WORKED SO HARD IN NEW YORK ON BEHALF OF THE ASEAN-SUPPORTED RESOLUTION. HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT SINGAPORE HAD EXPLAINED ITS POSITION IN NEW YORK BY EMPHASIZING THAT THE GOS DID NOT FAVOR ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER IN CAMBODIA, BUT BELIEVED THE UN SHOULD NOT INTERFERE IN CAMBODIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND SHOULD INSTEAD CALL UPON THE PARTIES TO ENGAGE IN NEGOTIATIONS. ON THAT BASIS THE QUESTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE ESF COULD BE DISTINGUISHED FROM SUPPORT FOR THE ASEAN RESOLUTION IN THE UN. I ARGUED THAT IN SUPPORTING THE ESF WOULD NOT BE AT ALL INCONSISTENT WITH THE POSITION TAKEN BY SINGAPORE IN NEW YORK SINCE THE GOS COULD JUSTIFY A CONTRIBUTION TO ESF BOTH ON THE HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS AND ON THE BASIS THAT NEGOTIATIONS COULD BE UNDERTAKEN MORE EASILY IF THE GOVERNMENT IN PHNOM PENH HAD SUFFICIENT FUNDS WITH WHICH TO OPERATE. TAN ACKNOWLEDGED THE POINT AND SAID THAT THE GOS WAS CAREFULLY REVIEWING ITS POSITION AND THAT THE MATTER WOULD SOON BE PUT BEFORE THE FOREIGN MINISTER. HE PROMISED TO KEEP ME INFORMED.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE GOS WILL CHANGE ITS POSITION ON THIS MATTER, THERE IS AN OUTSIDE CHANGE THAT IF ALL THE OTHER ASEAN GOVERNMENTS AND ESPECIALLY INDONESIA DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE IN ESF, THAT THE GOS MIGHT GO ALONG. MUCH WILL DEPEND ON WHAT THE INDONESIANS DECIDE AND WHETHER THE GOI PRESSURES ITS ASEAN COLLEAGUES TO FOLLOW SUIT. GRANT

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